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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 1071
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RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 0754
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 1229
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 000668

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: SWEDEN LEADS EU TROIKA TO NORTH KOREA

REF: RICHARDSON-KOEHLER EMAIL 10/21/09

Classified By: PolCouns Marc Koehler for reasons 1.4 (B) & (D).

¶1. (C) Poloffs met with MFA Director General for Asia Klas Molin October 22 to deliver reftel points and discuss the EU Troika's planned visit to North Korea October 27-31; we also spoke earlier with North Korea desk office Emma Nordlund. Sweden holds the rotating EU Presidency, so Molin will lead the EU delegation to Pyongyang. Molin noted that:

--Sweden agrees with the importance of the international community not accepting North Korea as a nuclear weapons state, and it will urge the prompt return of the DPRK to the Six Party Talks.

--Sweden strongly supports respect for human rights and will push the issue, especially childrens' rights.

--Sweden supports the "swift" implementation of UNSCR 1874. Last July, France and other EU Member States had proposed to ban a long list of luxury goods for export to the DPRK and to impose a "too sweeping" visa ban on DPRK officials at the vice minister level or above. Sweden opposed both proposals because they would have been too complicated to sort out and could not have been implemented quickly. The EU is still finalizing a "more concrete, narrow" list of luxury goods to ban.

--On calibrating humanitarian assistance, Sweden agrees that now is not the time for "new" economic development assistance, but it does plan to "resume one or two projects" that were discussed at a recent seminar hosted by the Swedish embassy in Washington (attended by EAP/K officers).

--On linking improvement in relations to denuclearization, while "keeping our long-term goals in mind," Sweden believes "non-political, humanitarian" engagement remains important and is considering "one or two seminars" with DPRK officials. (Separately, the head of an MFA-funded think tank in Stockholm told Pol Counselor this week that a delegation of DPRK officials and academics would be here at the end of the month for a five-day program with Swedish officials and academics.)

¶2. (C) As for the October 27-31 visit of the EU Troika to North Korea, Molin and Nordlund told us that their delegation was originally scheduled to be received at the vice minister level, but Pyongyang decided to "downgrade" the level of reception some days ago for reasons that are unclear. At the MFA, a Director General for Europe will now be the main interlocutor, although a Vice Foreign Minister may host a welcome dinner. The Swedes believe there will be a series of field trips to see aid projects. While the North Koreans have yet to finalize the itinerary, the Swedes have proposed visits to: hillside farming sites, orphanages, water

sanitation facilities, and handicap rehabilitation centers.

13. (C) As for the near future, the Swedish MFA wants to start focusing more on climate change and environmental issues -- "non-controversial issues" -- with North Korea, especially hazardous chemicals. Nordlund commented that North Korea is the only country to still produce DDT. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) approached the Swedes for help arranging a December workshop in Stockholm between DPRK and U.S. scientists on climate issues.

The Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences is handling the logistics and the MFA is working to get appropriate DPRK participation. So far North Korean reaction has been "positive."

14. (C) Comment: While Sweden supports U.S. goals of a denuclearized DPRK, it differs on tactics, believing that sanctions will have little effect on Pyongyang (or Tehran). While reluctantly accepting that missile- or WMD-related trade might be controlled, they are opposed to any sort of serious ban on luxury goods. We expect they will work quietly but effectively within the EU to prevent such.

BARZUN